The Government has taken a number of steps to control the price rise and to soften the impact of price rise on consumers such as augmenting domestic supplies of foodgrains through imports at zero/reduced rates of duty and ban on exports. As a result of the various steps taken by Government, prices of certain essential commodities such as wheat, edible oils have generally declined or are steady.

Perishing of fruits and vegetables before reaching the customers

3710. SHRIMATI KANIMOZHI: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether a large proportion of fruits and vegetables produced in India perish before reaching the customers;

(b) whether any study has been conducted to asses the extent of such wastage and if so, the details thereof;

(c) what are the steps taken by Government to minimize such wastage; and

(d) the details of the projects and programmes under implementation in Tamil Nadu in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (PROF. K.V. THOMAS): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. To assess the extent of wastage of fruits and vegetables, an Expert Committee was constituted by the Government of India which estimated the post harvest losses of horticultural produce at about 25-30% of the total production due to lack of adequate post harvest infrastructure facilities.

(c) and (d) With a view to minimize the wastage, the Government is implementing the following three schemes in the country including the State of Tamil Nadu:-

(i) Scheme of National Horticulture Board (NHB) involving development of commercial horticulture through production and post harvest management.

(ii) Technology Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture in North Eastern States, Sikkim, Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand (TMNE); and

(iii) National Horticulture Mission (NHM) for the remaining States of the country.

Under these schemes financial assistance is provided for setting up of cold storages, collection centre, pack houses, refrigerated vans, mobile processing unit etc. In Tamil Nadu State, so far an amount of Rs.202.40 lakhs has been provided for cold storage, pack houses, refrigerated vans and mobile processing unit.

Escalation of food prices

3711. SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA:
SHRI SANJAY RAUT:
SHRI KALRAJ MISHRA:

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state: